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**PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE: WHY THE U.S. NAVY NEEDS A SEPARATE
STRATEGY & PLANS COMMUNITY**

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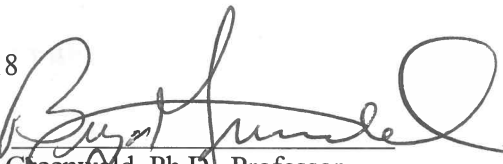
A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirements of a Master of Science Degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Joint Forces Staff College or the Department of Defense.

This paper is entirely my own work except as documented in footnotes.


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ABSTRACT

Educated strategists and war planners are in high demand at the service, Combatant Command (CCMD), Joint Staff, and Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) levels. Our current National Military Strategy (NMS) and other strategic documents articulate five major plans and their branches, supporting national objectives for the Department of Defense (DoD) and other government agencies. Military strategists/planners are put to the test to develop strategy, doctrine, campaign, and contingency plans that support these national objectives. Combatant Commanders (CCDRs), as well as Navy fleet commanders, rely on planning school graduates to shape their organizations' strategy and planning, and give them options to proceed when the strategic environment changes.

This thesis argues the need for a centralized Navy Strategy and Plans officer community. A dedicated corps would allow midgrade officers to gain both education and experience over time, transitioning into senior planners that fill key positions to support their commanders with sound, logical recommendations. U.S. Navy strategists and planners have the opportunity to shape their service, leverage critical thinking skills at the strategic and operational levels, and provide planning and programmatic solutions that Flag and General Officers can execute. This analysis examines current models for Navy Strategist and Operational Planner subspecialties, intermediate and senior level planning schools, billeting at the fleet and joint levels for knowledge application, and the success of the U.S. Army Functional Area – 59 program as a centralized example for establishing a dedicated corps of Navy strategists and planners. The final product is a proposed Strategy and Plans Officer career path where entry begins at the 0-4 level, and spans a 12-year period where officers gain targeted educations and up to six tours within their fields.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

“In preparing for battle, I have always found that plans are useless but planning is indispensable.” – Dwight D. Eisenhower

The U.S. Navy needs a centralized Restricted Line (RL) Strategy and Plans (S&P) Officer with the education and skills necessary to provide critical thinking at the service and joint planning levels.¹ A separate officer community devoted to the “Operational Art” of warfare would not only conduct planning, but also provide the fundamental designs for strategic direction, inform service programmatic requirements, and present Flag and General Officers with informed decision options. Selected officers in the corps would enter a new career path that focuses on strategy/planning education at the Command and Staff, and Senior Level Colleges (SLC), followed by billet placement within Navy and joint planning staffs. Over time, these officers would gain experience in their craft via exposure at mid-grade levels (O-4) to operational fleet planning and at senior levels (O-5/O-6) to strategic planning within the Navy N3/N5, Joint Staff, and CCMD communities. A long-term career S&P Officer, armed with years of knowledge and experience, will become part of the “brain trust” that Flag/General Officers and civilian leaders will leverage to influence their areas of responsibility. The only problem is that this central community does not exist...yet.

There is no centralized command or concept for bringing together or managing strategic and operational planners within the Navy. The Navy approaches the necessity for assigning officers to these billets in a decentralized manner. That is, Navy N3/N5 as the designated sponsor for the Navy Operational Planner (NOP) and Naval Strategist subspecialties manages

¹ Note: Unrestricted Line (URL) officers are command-at-sea eligible within the areas of Surface, Submarine, and Aviation warfare communities. URL officers also include Sea, Air, and Land (SEAL), and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) communities. Restricted Line (RL) officers are not command-at-sea eligible. Staff Corps (SC) officers are also not command-at-sea eligible, and include communities such as Supply, Medical, Chaplain, Civil Engineer, and Judge Advocate General's Corps.

Unrestricted Line Officers (URL) to fill coded billet requirements as directed by the Bureau of Personnel (BUPERS).² BUPERS fills planning school quotas with eligible officers, both line and staff, who require a Master's Degree and Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) as a prerequisite to promotion within their warfare specialties. The NOP process is split between BUPERS and Navy N3/N5 to ensure the Navy fills required billets and participating URL officers meet their JPME and Master's obligations.³ The Navy views planners and strategists as URL manpower pools to satisfy specialty billets for a single joint tour, averaging 36 months, but service-waiverable to 24 months based on career milestone needs.⁴ Navy service planning tours at the fleet and N3/N5 levels are 24 months or less. The Navy's return on investment for command eligible URL officers in planning fields is small. Due to URL career timelines associated with promotion and command, graduates of advanced planning schools are essentially "one and done," at the 0-5/0-6 levels, completing a required two-year payback in conjunction with up to three years in a joint planning tour before moving on to command, or retirement. Currently, the Navy has a system that meets its needs minimally. It fills necessary billets, but requires no developed expertise or mastery. In this chaotic, complex, multi-domain environment, one must ask – is the current system good enough?

² Department of the Navy, *Naval Military Personnel Manual*, NAVPERS 15560D (Millington, TN: Department of the Navy, June 9, 2017), 1301-233.

³ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Officer Professional Military Education Policy* (Washington DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, May 29, 2015), A-1.

⁴ U.S. Department of Defense, *Directive-type Memorandum 17-005: FY17 Changes to the DoD Joint Officer Management (JOM) Program* (Washington DC: Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel, March 24, 2017), 2.

Purpose

This thesis argues that the Navy must create a distinct combined strategy and planning officer community to enable the Navy to maximize its warfighting resources and make synergistic contributions to the service, joint force, and the nation. In today's rapidly changing security environment, educated war planners and strategists are in high demand at the service, CCMD, Joint Staff, and OSD levels. Our current NMS and other strategic documents center around five major plans and their branches for supporting national objectives at the DoD and Interagency levels.⁵ Planners develop strategy and doctrine, as well as campaign and contingency plans that support policy and attainment of the nation's enduring national interests as described in the National Security Strategy (NSS).⁶ CCDRs, and numbered fleet commanders rely on their planning school graduates to shape their strategy, plans, and operations to give them options to succeed in a contested strategic environment. The Navy has managed this responsibility previously in a decentralized and laissez faire manner; the rapidity of change in today's strategic environment strongly suggests a more direct, hands-on approach. The time to create a dedicated centralized planning community is now.

Navy strategists and planners have the opportunity to shape their present and future service by influencing the very plans they help create. A centralized officer planning community would allow selected midgrade officers (O-4 with warfare designation) to gain both education and experience over time, and develop into senior officer planners that would occupy key positions to support their commanders with sound, logical recommendations.

The objective (*ends*) of a centralized corps is to provide skilled, experienced strategists/planners that work at the operational and strategic levels of military policy and

⁵ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *National Military Strategy* (Washington DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, November 11, 2016).

⁶ U.S. President, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, December 2017), 4.

planning. The *ways* for achieving that objective are to provide education in the art of planning and leverage experience across a wide range of strategy and planning billets. The *means* that enable the *ends* and *ways* include a centralized planning community champion that provides oversight for officer career development, promotion, and proper billeting for experience. The final products of the centralized community are officers that can connect the dots of the strategic framework (Policy, Strategy, and Planning), and provide a “brain-trust” across a minimum of three dedicated career planning tours to support senior leader decision making.

Thesis Statement

A separate functional U.S. Navy Strategy and Plans officer community with the proper career path that identifies requirements in education, billeting, and opportunities for promotion gives the Navy a dedicated competitive advantage among the services in developing strategy, campaign, and contingency plans at both fleet and joint commands by providing a professional force, well versed in the art of warfare, to apply critical thinking to the nation’s most difficult security challenges. Navy Strategy and Planning officers will support military commanders in the logical development of strategy, doctrine, and plans, as well as make recommendations to the Navy, CCMDs, Joint Staff, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) regarding the need for future force shaping to execute these plans.

Research Methodology and Limitations

This paper examines the strengths and weaknesses of the current decentralized systems approach to providing strategists and planners across a typical URL officer career path. The methodology provides discussion on the use of a centralized career-planning model instead of the current system. Factors will include a comparison of the Naval Strategist and NOP subspecialty objectives; a review of education levels and requirements; billet placement and timing; other service models, specifically the U.S. Army Functional Area promotion example; the number of potential tours within the current and proposed systems; and the benefits of leveraging long-term strategic and operational planning knowledge that supports decision making.

The limitations of this paper are threefold. First, the research does not examine all service planning models fully due to space limitations, and focuses only on Navy service planning within the URL communities. Second, the research does not present a 100% solution to the costs associated with standing up a centralized planning community. Finally, the URL career comparison uses the Surface Warfare Officer (SWO) career path, command and non-command eligible, only for simplification.

This thesis is for conceptual purposes only to complete the Joint Advanced Warfighting School (JAWS) educational requirement. Creating a separate officer community to improve U.S. Navy strategic thought and planning is one of many possible recommendations to improve the status quo. If approved by the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) as a Manpower Authorization (MPA), the concept will be submitted in accordance with the *Navy Officer Manpower and Personnel Classifications* manual, for establishing an official designator code.

Notably, this analysis focuses more directly on the U.S. Navy. However, indirectly it provides value to the joint community by arguing for systemic changes in the way the Navy selects, educates, manages, and uses its strategic and operational planners. By doing so, this thesis endeavors to give the Navy a community of strategy and operational planners capable of not only improving the way the Navy plans and operates, but also able to contribute more directly and competently to planning and execution at the joint, national, and multinational levels.

CHAPTER 2: THE NAVY'S CURRENT PLANNING ENVIRONMENT

“Not satisfied that we were thinking creatively enough, I sent a message in early September to the Army requesting a fresh team of planners. A four-man team of graduates from the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS), the elite year-long program at Command and General Staff College that concentrated on campaign planning arrived in the middle of the month... On October 6th, the planning wizards (SAMS) delivered their proposed battle plan.”

-H. Norman Schwarzkopf

Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Strategy

The CNO strategy, “A Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority,” is the foundation for continued officer planning education and the development of a dedicated S&P career path. The strategy was written as an operational design, and revolves around four Lines of Effort (LOEs) that support the Navy’s primary mission of conducting prompt and sustained combat operations at sea to protect America’s interests.¹ LOE 2, “Achieve High Velocity Learning at Every Level,” contains two Intermediate Military Objectives (IMOs) that further the argument for a dedicated S&P career path. IMO 3, “Optimize the Navy Intellectual Enterprise to maximize combat effectiveness and efficiency,” and IMO 4, “Understanding the lessons of history so as not to relearn them,” support the educational piece of the S&P career path.² High Velocity Learning to Optimize the Intellectual Enterprise is exactly what the service and joint planning schools accomplish. Critical thinking in the development of strategy and plans, while applying historical campaign analysis, is the foundational methodology used by the “Operational Artist” to achieve victory.

The final LOE (4), “Expand and Strengthen our Network of Partners,” contains one vital IMO that supports the Navy’s participation in joint planning development. IMO 1, “Enhance

¹ Department of the Navy, *A Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority*, CNO Strategy (Washington DC: Chief of Naval Operations, January 2016), 2.

² Ibid., 8.

integration with our Joint Service and Interagency partners at all levels of interaction, to include current and future planning, concept, and capability development and assessment,” reinforces the need for joint education and service plans integration into the nation’s top priority plans as defined by the 2016 NMS.³ Navy officers with strong planning backgrounds and joint experience possess the skill sets necessary to ensure proper plan development at both the service operational and joint strategic levels. A dedicated S&P career path that includes early education at the 0-4 level, followed by at least three service and joint planning tours, would provide a pool of officers ready to develop strategy and solve tough planning problems by leveraging career-wide (12 years as one progresses to 0-6) expertise.

The Importance of Military Planning

Why is military planning so important? Perhaps President Dwight D. Eisenhower stated it best in his 1958 Defense Establishment address to Congress, “Separate ground, sea, and air warfare is gone forever. If ever again we should be involved in war, we will fight it in all elements, with all services, as one single concentrated effort.”⁴ This single “effort” across *Space*, *Time*, and *Force* is the generation of a strategic or operational effect that leads to victory. It takes skilled planners from all military services to bring the effort together to fight and win wars. Battle plans throughout American history have framed the direction a commander must go to defeat an enemy. Planners educated in “Operational Art” become invaluable, as they are the ones who develop the strategy, campaign, and contingency plans that senior leaders execute. Each service, as well as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), sponsors a dedicated

³ Department of the Navy, *A Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority*, CNO Strategy (Washington DC: Chief of Naval Operations, January 2016), 9.

⁴ Special Message to the Congress on Reorganization of the Defense Establishment, April 3, 1958.

plans school that generates skilled officers for this purpose. The majority of the services treat planning as an additional duty to primary warfare specialties; however, due to the importance of strategic development, operational design, and planning in such documents as the NSS, National Defense Strategy (NDS), and NMS, now is the time to create a dedicated Navy planning corps to oversee these efforts.

Navy Planning Officer Development Background: “Is the current system good enough?”

The Navy offers service and joint planning school quotas to all eligible URL, RL, and Staff Corps officer communities. A Master’s degree and JPME milestones are required for warfare specialty advancement, command screening, and future Flag Officer promotion. Most planning schools, service or joint, fulfill the Navy’s requirements for both JPME accreditation and a Master’s degree for career advancement. A typical command eligible URL career path (Surface, Submarine, Aviation, SEAL, and EOD) builds these milestones into the education and billeting tracks of each specialty to ensure that officers stay competitive in their development for command and post-command opportunities. If milestones are not met, and URL officers fail to screen for command based on performance or career shortfalls, those officers are placed into the Special Mission manpower pool to complete an executive officer, or other equivalent tour, and are no longer considered for command. These Special Mission officers (O-4 and above) are now eligible for continued service in the Specialty Career Path (SCP) fields, as an alternative for non-command eligible URL officers.⁵ SCP selected officers remain in their warfare specialties, and

⁵ Department of the Navy, *Naval Military Personnel Manual*, NAVPERS 15560D (Millington, TN: Department of the Navy, June 9, 2017), 1301-233.

are ranked against both command eligible and non-command eligible officers for promotion.⁶

Navy Operational Planner is one of ten disciplines within the SCP.

Is the Navy's current plans education and billeting system good enough to meet both career milestones and provide educated, experienced planning officers to support critical fleet and joint positions? An analysis of a typical SWO career path, both command and non-command Special Mission eligible, may have the answer.

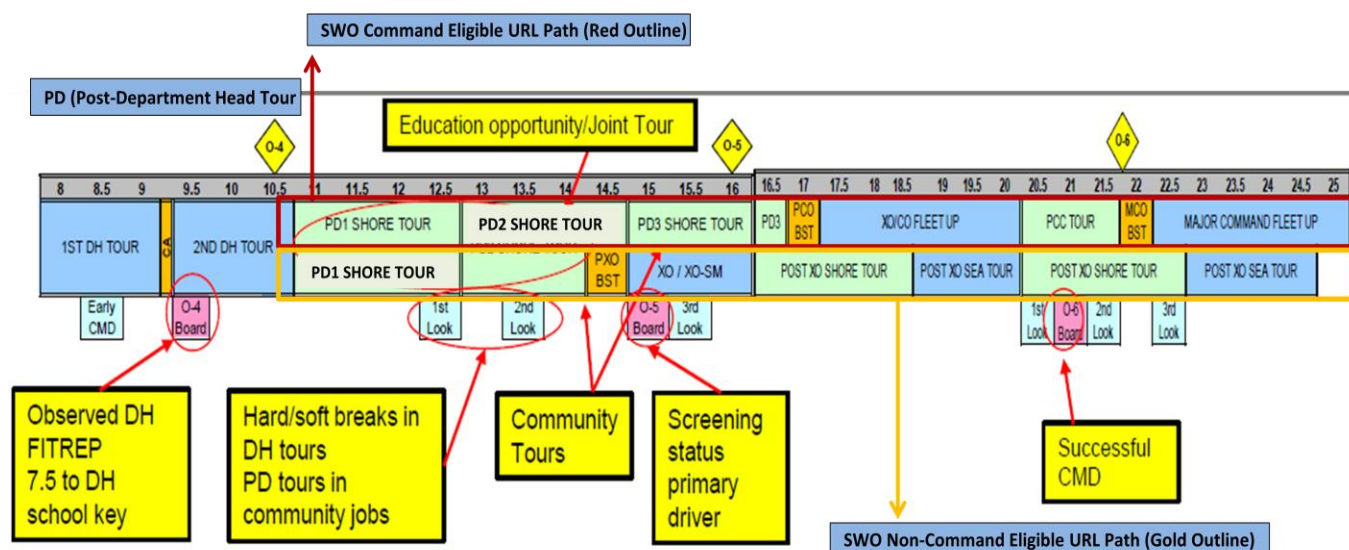


Figure 1: Surface Warfare Officer (SWO) career path – Department Head (DH) to Major Command

Figure 1 exemplifies both the SWO career path to Major Command (top red outline), and the career path of a non-command eligible Special Mission officer (bottom Gold outline).⁷ As a post-Department Head (PD) 0-4 at the 11-year mark, the Major Command career path builds in 5 years of shore duty for educational purposes and service/joint tours out to 16 years. This affords command eligible officers the opportunity to complete their Master's degree (if not completed during the 2-year Junior Officer shore duty window as an 0-3) and any service or joint payback

⁶ Department of the Navy, *Naval Military Personnel Manual*, NAVPERS 15560D (Millington, TN: Department of the Navy, June 9, 2017), 1301-233.

⁷ Navy Personnel Command, "Surface Warfare Officer Community Brief," <http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/officer/Detailing/surfacewarfare/Pages/default.aspx> (accessed January 3, 2018).

tours to meet present and future warfare milestones. The next available Major Command shore duty is at the 20 year mark, and only has a window of up to 24 months before transitioning into actual Major Command (0-6 level). The only available window for a service or joint planning school, and the required follow-on tour, is between the 11-to16 year shore duty marks. If a Major Command career path officer chooses a 1 year joint planning school (JAWS), the payback for full Joint Qualified Officer (JQO) designation at a CCMD averages around 36 months (service waivable to 24 months).⁸ This combination takes up 4 of the 5 years worth of shore duty, and essentially gives the joint planning community a “one and done” officer with no further utilization of skills. If he/she chooses a service planning school (MAWS), the payback tour is up to 24 months on a Fleet Staff, taking the officer out to 3 of the 5 years of shore duty, allowing for possibly one additional tour in a non-planning or joint billet (less than the required 36 months for JQO, but service waivable based on critical service milestone requirements).⁹ Does this example currently work for the Navy? Yes, it satisfies a Master’s degree, JPME requirements, and fills critical planning billets with a variety of warfare skilled officers; however, the single planning tour and potential educational atrophy up to the 20 year mark (due to operational tours), seriously limits an officer’s knowledge, experience, and ability to contribute to strategy/plans development. The Navy’s return on investment to the service and joint planning community is small within the SWO Major Command path.

The SWO Special Mission, non-command eligible career path (bottom gold outline in Figure 1) is more flexible in supporting both the service and joint planning communities. As a post-Department Head at the 11-year mark, Special Mission officers have a 3.5 year shore duty window for educational and joint opportunities. Officers can choose to complete a 1-year joint

⁸ U.S. Department of Defense, *Directive-type Memorandum 17-005: FY17 Changes to the DoD Joint Officer Management (JOM) Program* (Washington DC: Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel, March 24, 2017), 2.

⁹ Ibid., 2.

planning school (MAWS), and then fulfill a 36-month payback tour for joint credit. This would take Special Mission officers beyond the 14.5 year mark (when the Executive Officer (XO) training track begins), for an additional 6 months to meet the full joint requirement. The XO training track would delay for 6 months, prior to an officer beginning their XO/XO-SM tour. If a Special Mission officer graduates from a 1-year service plans school (MAWS), the officer would complete his/her 24 month payback and meet XO training track obligations on time. JPME qualifications for JQO would need to be completed at the next available 16.5-year shore tour. Based on the Special Mission career path, an officer has the flexibility to complete at least three planning tours; the windows being at the 11-14.5, 16.5-18.5, and 20.5-22.5 year marks.

The problem is that Special Mission officers are not identified until the 13.5-year mark, after their 2nd Commanding Officer board look. By then, Special Mission officers are 2 years into their shore tour, and do not have the time to complete plans education and payback if the officers did not choose school options earlier (11-year mark). XO-only and Special Mission officers, while in their sea duty billets, receive a 3rd Commanding Officer look at 15.5 years, and have the potential to be elevated out of Special Mission, non-command status. These chances are extremely rare, and most remain as Special Mission officers for the rest of their careers. The two other shore duty options at the 16.5 and 20.5 year marks are still available for plans education and billeting. This process is very decentralized and discombobulated, as it is controlled by the Navy Bureau of Personnel (BUPERS) and the desires of the Special Mission officer, if he/she chooses to prioritize a planning career specialty among a multitude of choices. There is no one dedicated career path that includes education, billeting, and a centralized Flag Officer champion for any Navy planner.

Specialty Career Path (SCP)

The SCP program, created in 2004, provides non-command screened URL officers with specialized career alternatives, and supplements the demand for midgrade and senior-level officers in growing mission areas.¹⁰ SCPs are available to URL officers only, and are not open to other Navy RL and Staff Corps communities. An officer must apply via the Navy's Military Personnel Manual (MILPERSMAN) package requirements, and be accepted by an annual SCP board for entry into 1 of 10 careers.¹¹ SCP programs have defined Enterprise Lead Agents (ELAs) that act as administrative sponsors to each specialty discipline.¹² Responsibilities for these agents include validation and maintenance of the SCP billet base with BUPERS, submitting input for inclusion in selection boards, and defining specialty requirements. ELAs are also required to coordinate with the Assistant Commander of Navy Personnel Command, Career Management Department (PERS-4), for liaison and approval of executing SCP responsibilities. Specific URL warfare area detailers (Navy personnel managers) work with SCP members to fill billets when officers are off-cycle in support of their warfare operational tours.

The process uses ELAs as makeshift specialty administrators, and capitalizes on their ability to provide SCP services as a separate collateral duty to primary mission responsibilities. The process also uses SCP officers as manpower pools to fill at-sea and other operational warfare billets when not engaged in their shore tour disciplines. This is a valid working method for balancing support within the URL communities, both in operations and specialty, however, the trade-offs tend to default to the operational needs of the Navy based on necessity. Career development, as noted in the Navy Operational Planner community, may take a backseat based

¹⁰ Department of the Navy, *Naval Military Personnel Manual*, NAVPERS 15560D (Millington, TN: Department of the Navy, June 9, 2017), 1301-233.

¹¹ Department of the Navy, *Naval Military Personnel Manual*, NAVPERS 15560D (Millington, TN: Department of the Navy, June 9, 2017), 1301-233.

¹² *Ibid.*, 1301-233.

on operational requirements and timing.¹³ This further complicates specialty development and application.

SCP disciplines and assigned ELAs listed below.¹⁴

Discipline	Command	Liaison Directorate
Missile Defense	Navy Air & Missile Defense Command	41
Anti-Terrorism Force Protection	U.S. Fleet Forces Command	41
Anti-Submarine Warfare	Navy Mine & ASW Command	42
Mine Warfare	Navy Mine & ASW Command	41
Shore Installation Management	Commander, Navy Installations Command	43
Strategic Sealift	Commander, Military Sealift Command	41
Financial Management	ASN Financial Mgmt & Comptroller	44
Navy Operational Planner	OPNAV N3/N5	44
Operations Analysis	OPNAV N81	44
Education/Training Management	Naval Education & Training Command	43

Figure 2: SCP Career Options and Executive Agents

Once approved for entry into the program, SCP officers become ineligible for traditional Navy Commanding Officer paths.¹⁵ These officers are retained in their parent URL warfare communities, and are ranked against all of their peers for promotion beginning at the 0-5 level.¹⁶ Because each specialty is not considered a centralized career path, non-command eligible Special Mission officers inside of the SCPs compete for 0-6 with post-command 0-5 officers within their

¹³ “Specialty Career Path” Official Briefing, Slide 5, 3 July 2013, Powerpoint, Provided by PERS-4 of the Navy Bureau of Personnel.

¹⁴ “Specialty Career Path” Official Briefing, Slide 8, 3 July 2013, Powerpoint, Provided by PERS-4 of the Navy Bureau of Personnel.

¹⁵ Ibid., Slide 11.

¹⁶ Ibid., Slide 5.

original warfare communities, and rarely promote to Captain. The officers stall out at 0-5, even though they are contributing to their service and joint communities within these specialty paths. This creates a promotions dilemma for experienced officers in each field, most notably, the NOP community, as they can never serve in 0-6 Chief of Plans billets on any Navy or joint CCMD staff. Any leveraging of planning education and experience at the senior Navy levels stops at the 0-5 level.

The intent of SCP is to provide a cadre of warfare qualified officers who can provide experience and expertise in disciplines that are critical and highly desired by the Navy.¹⁷ Commands with SCP available billets include Navy Fleet Staffs, CCMDs, and the Joint Staff.¹⁸ The problems facing the management of this program originate from its decentralized execution across a wide spectrum of URL officers.

First, SCP officers reside in their original warfare communities, and compete for promotion among command eligible officers. There is no centralized controlled career path with separate criteria for milestones and promotions within a specialty. The Navy uses these officers for their skill sets based on the needs of the Navy, and may or may not assign them to their associated specialty billets for further career development. SCP billets are also not exclusive to SCP officers and are filled by a majority of non-SCP officers due to low inventory.¹⁹ NOP officers have a running inventory of 15 personnel against 63 designated SCP planning billets as of 2018.²⁰ That is only a 23 percent fill rate since the program's inception in 2010.²¹ This

¹⁷ "Specialty Career Path" Official Briefing, Slide 4, 3 July 2013, Powerpoint, Provided by PERS-4 of the Navy Bureau of Personnel.

¹⁸ Ibid., Slide 7.

¹⁹ Ibid., Slide 5.

²⁰ Interview with LCDR Bralyn Cathey, Navy Personnel Command (PERS-410B) Specialty Career Path Detailer, February 16, 2018.

²¹ Note: The total number of available Navy/joint planning billets is 168 and approximately 40 percent of these are designated for NOP officers (63 billets). Source is CDR William Rayburn (PERS-442), Major Staff Placement Detailer.

further removes SCP officers from potential payback and developmental tours, shortening their ability to gain experience at senior levels. Second, Special Mission and SCP officers are used as manpower pools to fill gapped at-sea billets within the air and sea warfare communities. SCPs officers are responsible for supporting their primary warfare areas on a rotational basis when not active in their specialty (see Figure 1 career path for XO/Special Mission officers, highlighted in gold). This removes officers from any specialty concentration for large periods, and defaults to the needs of the Navy for filling priority operational billets. Third, promotion opportunities at the 0-6 level are extremely rare, as SCP officers compete with the URL post-command pool for advancement. To date, only 1 SCP officer has been promoted to 0-6 in the programs 13 year history (Missile Defense – Selected for FY 2018).²²

Navy Operational Planner (NOP)

NOP is the specialty within SPC that concentrates on planning officer development. Desired skills sets for this program include JPME completion, advanced planning experience, and graduation from a service or joint plans school (JAWS, MAWS, SAMS, SAW).²³ Of note, planning schools are available to many Navy officer communities, and are not exclusive to the NOP specialty for educational milestones and JPME requirements. NOP officers have a nominal career path of education, fleet staff, and joint planning placement based on the Figure 1 career track for a non-command, Special Mission officer. Windows for planning skill development are approximated between the 11-14.5 (3-years), 16.5-18.5 (2-years), and 20.5-22.5 (2-years) year marks for shore duty.

²² Interview with LCDR Bralyn Cathey, Navy Personnel Command (PERS-410B) Specialty Career Path Detailer, February 16, 2018.

²³ “Specialty Career Path” Official Briefing, Slide 35, 3 July 2013, Powerpoint, Provided by PERS-4 of the Navy Bureau of Personnel.

As a SCP program, NOP officers support operational sea tours in off-rotations between skill set development. This removes officers from strategy and planning billets until completion of these tours, thus illustrating the decentralized nature of the program geared to support many service requirements. There are also opportunities for NOP Commanding Officer and Executive Officer equivalents on both fleet and joint planning staffs; however, command screening for these billets must meet parent warfare community requirements prior to selection by a SCP screening board.²⁴ The drawback to this is that NOP officers must pass command qualification boards for commanding a ship, submarine, or squadron in order to select for NOP Commanding Officer. As mentioned earlier, SCP officers are non-command eligible, but must still apply for and pass these boards. The current command qualification criterion for SCP does not match, nor meet the strategic intent of professionally developing a plans officer- it meets the intent of the parent URL warfare designator.

Navy Strategy Subspecialty

Navy Strategist is a subspecialty code that participating URL officers can attain based on specific requirement criteria. The subspecialty's purpose is to enhance the Navy's ability to develop and implement strategy and policy while strengthening the connective tissue between educational programs and strategy billet assignment.²⁵ Established in 2015, the program's mission is to create top-tier strategic experts over the span of a career through strategy/policy education, followed by assignments designed to hone their skills in a subspecialty billet during

²⁴ "Specialty Career Path" Official Briefing, Slide 9, 3 July 2013, Powerpoint, Provided by PERS-4 of the Navy Bureau of Personnel.

²⁵ Naval Administrative Message, "Establishment of the Navy Strategy Subspecialty," NAVADMIN 011/15 (Chief of Naval Operations: DTG 141554Z Jan 2015), 1.

shore assignments.²⁶ Selection to the subspecialty comes in two forms, one is automatic, and the other requires application.

Automatic selection comes when an officer completes or has already participated in 1 of 3 available post-graduate programs; the Federal Executive Fellowship (FEF), Politico-Military Masters, or Arthur S. Moreau strategic studies.²⁷ An additional automatic selection occurs when an officer completes 1 of 78 specifically designated N5/J5 strategy billets within the Navy and joint communities. Outside of automatic selection, officers can apply for the program if they meet the criteria as established in the 2015 Naval Strategy subspecialty message. Two additional graduate programs are available for applied entry into the subspecialty, the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) Strategic Studies curriculum, and the Naval War College Advanced Studies in Naval Strategy (ASNS).²⁸ Over 300 Navy officers, mostly senior O-5s/O-6s, were pre-selected into the program to serve as establishment cadre for potentially filling the available service and joint strategy billets.²⁹ Selection is reserved for URL officers only, and personnel remain in their designated warfare communities for operational career milestones and promotion. The Naval Strategy subspecialty is not affiliated with SCP, and is considered a separate program. Navy N3/N5 sponsors both NOP and Naval Strategy officers. Before evaluating the Navy's planning and strategy subspecialties further, it is helpful to review what educational opportunities and post graduation utilization exist at the service and joint levels.

²⁶ Naval Administrative Message, "Establishment of the Navy Strategy Subspecialty," NAVADMIN 011/15 (Chief of Naval Operations: DTG 141554Z Jan 2015), 1.

²⁷ Ibid., 2.

²⁸ Ibid., 2.

²⁹ America's Navy, "300 Officers Nominated for New Naval Strategist Subspecialty Code," <http://www.navy.mil/submit/display.asp> (accessed December 21, 2017).

Available Planning Schools

The purpose of this section is to establish baseline knowledge of the available planning schools, and to compare the similarities and differences each school offers for tailored education. Advanced Warfighting Schools, both at the service and joint levels, provide the educational foundations for strengthening an officer's critical thinking, strategic development, and ability to create military plans to address complex problems. The Joint Staff and the services tailor these graduate programs to produce small cadres of officers that take their skills back to the service and joint planning staffs to support senior leaders in strategy and plans development. The majority of plans school curriculums center on historical foundations of war, strategy, and the application of operational and strategic level planning. Planning schools prepare officers to assume leadership roles within the major staffs immediately to create and revise plans, begin running joint/operational plans teams, and provide sound military advice to 3 and 4-star commanders. Most of the planning schools incur a payback tour between 1 and 3 years that includes filling critical strategy/planning billets across the military communities.

The service schools include the U.S. Army School of Advanced Studies (SAMS), U.S. Navy Maritime Advanced Warfare School (MAWS), U.S. Marine Corps School of Advanced Warfare (SAW), and the U.S. Air Force School of Advanced Air and Space Studies (SAASS). The Joint Advanced Warfighting School (JAWS) is the only joint planning school, sponsored by the CJCS. All schools are available for Navy strategy and planning officer educations.






Service	School	Students	Degree	Level	Obligation
 USA	SAMS School of Advanced Military Studies	Up to 144 x 04/05s Post ILE	Master in Military Arts and Science	Operational / Tactical Div/Corps/Army Component	Up to 24 Months Planner
 USN	MAWS Maritime Advanced Warfighting School	Up to 35 x 04/05s Post ILE	Master in Defense and Strategic Studies (NVC)	Operational Fleet/ Navy Component	Up to 24 Months Planner
 USAF	SAASS School of Advanced Air and Space Studies	Up to 39 x 04s Post ILE	Master of Airpower Art and Science	Strategic / Operational Air Force / Joint Staff / CCMD	Strategy Positions
 USMC	SAW School of Advanced Warfighting	Up to 24 x 04s Post ILE	Master of Operational Studies	Operational /Tactical MAGTF / Marine Component	Up to 36 Months Planner
 CJCS JPME II	JAWS Joint Advanced Warfighting School	Up to 40 x 05-06 SLE	M.S. Campaign Planning and Strategy	Strategic / Operational CCMD	36 Months Joint Planner

Figure 3: Overview of Advanced Warfighting Schools

U.S. Army School of Advanced Studies (SAMS)

The mission of SAMS is to “educate members of the Armed Forces, U.S. Allies, and the Interagency at the graduate level to become agile and adaptive leaders who are critical and creative thinkers who produce viable options to solve operational and strategic problems.”³⁰ SAMS graduated its first class of planners in 1984, and is the oldest among all service and joint planning schools. The school offers 3 different graduate-level degree programs that educate future planners in the performance of their duties. The first, Advanced Military Studies Program (AMSP), develops “effective planners who help senior leaders understand the operational environment, and visualize viable solutions to operational problems.”³¹ Studies include operation theory, Army doctrine, and military history. The program is 11 months, and incurs up to a 24-month payback. The second, Advanced Strategic Leadership Studies Program (ASLSP), is a 24-

³⁰ United States Army Combined Arms Center, “School of Advanced Military Studies,” <http://usacac.army.mil/organizations/cace/cgsc/sams> (accessed December 21, 2017).

³¹ Ibid., (accessed December 21, 2017).

month senior level course (O-5s) that prepares officers to be strategic thinkers and planners at the CCMD and Joint Task Force (JTF) levels.³² Studies include theater-strategic level Joint and Army Land operations, doctrine, and military history. JPME II is also awarded to officers who complete the course. The final program, Advanced Strategic Planning and Policy (ASP3), is a multi-year combination of civilian doctorate level strategic studies, and on-site SAMS JPME II planning courses.³³ Officers who complete this program are assigned to service and joint strategy billets. SAMS graduates approximately 144 officers annually, the largest of any planning school.

U.S. Navy Maritime Advanced Warfighting School (MAWS)

The mission of MAWS is to “develop strategic and operational leaders with the skills required to plan, execute, and assess, combined, joint, and naval operations.”³⁴ MAWS began as the Naval Operational Planner Course (NOPC) in 1998 as a CNO-directed curriculum. MAWS is a 13-month graduate course that awards a Master of Arts in National Security and Strategic Studies (Naval War College) degree upon completion. It integrates JPME I courses, 3 electives comprising the Joint Planner area of study, and a capstone of real-world planning assistance to a Fleet or Joint commander.³⁵ Specific planning studies include electives in Fundamentals of Operational Art and Doctrine (studying classical thinkers, naval tactics, naval operations, and elements of operational warfare), the Navy Planning Process/Joint Force Maritime Component Commander (JFMCC), and Operational Planning Considerations for the Joint Force Commander

³² United States Army Combined Arms Center, “School of Advanced Military Studies,” <http://usacac.army.mil/organizations/cace/cgsc/sams> (accessed December 21, 2017).

³³ Ibid., (accessed December 21, 2017).

³⁴ U.S. Naval War College, “Maritime Advanced Warfighting School,” <https://usnwc.edu/college-of-naval-command-and-staff/Additional-Academic-Opportunities/Maritime-Advanced-Warfighting-School> (accessed December 21, 2017).

³⁵ Ibid., (accessed December 21, 2017).

(Joint Planning Process, Joint Task Force, and Joint Commander employment considerations).³⁶

A final Capstone Planning Project, where students provide planning assistance to participating fleet and joint CCMD staffs, completes the course. MAWS payback tours are between 24-36 months within service and joint command N5/J5s. Students must still complete JPME II requirements at the Joint Forces Staff College upon completion of full joint tours to receive JQO status. MAWS graduates approximately 35 officers annually.

U.S. Marine Corps School of Advanced Warfare (SAW)

The mission of SAW is to “develop complex problem solving and decision making skills that can be used to improve the warfighting capabilities of an organization at the operational level of war.”³⁷ SAW was modeled after the successes of SAMS, and graduated its first class in 1990.³⁸ SAW is an 11-month graduate course that awards a Master’s degree in Operational Studies. JPME I requirements are a pre-requisite for applicants who desire to attend the course. Specific studies include problem solving and decision-making design, military warfare historical analysis, the operational planning process, and an extensive European and Pacific staff ride.³⁹ SAW graduates within the Marine Corps also receive special designators as Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) planners.⁴⁰ SAW payback tours are up to 36-months on Marine Corps

³⁶ U.S. Naval War College, “Maritime Advanced Warfighting School,” <https://usnwc.edu/college-of-naval-command-and-staff/Additional-Academic-Opportunities/Maritime-Advanced-Warfighting-School> (accessed December 21, 2017).

³⁷ Marine Corps University, “School of Advanced Warfighting,” <https://www.usmcu.edu/saw> (accessed December 22, 2017).

³⁸ Colonel John A. Toolan and Charles D. McKenna. “Educating for the Future,” *Marine Corps Gazette*, February 2006, 13.

³⁹ Marine Corps University, “School of Advanced Warfighting,” <https://www.usmcu.edu/saw> (accessed December 22, 2017).

⁴⁰ Ibid., (accessed December 22, 2017).

planning staffs, and graduates are expected to fill joint billets later in their careers. SAW graduates approximately 24 officers annually.

U.S. Air Force School of Advanced Air and Space Studies (SAASS)

The mission of SAASS is to “produce strategists through advanced education in the art and sciences of air, space, and cyberspace power for the Air Force and the Nation.”⁴¹ SAASS was first chartered by the Air Force Chief of Staff in 1988, and graduated its first class of officers in 1992. The schools’ educational emphasis is strategic only, and does not teach operational planning or team leadership. SAASS is a 12-month course that awards a Master of Philosophy degree in Military Strategy. JPME I requirements are also a prerequisite prior to entry within the course. Specific studies include policy, diplomacy, international relations, geopolitics, military and political theory, and space and cyber power.⁴² SAASS students do not incur planning payback tours as found in the other schools. They simply fill key military strategy billets throughout their careers, both at the service and joint levels. SAASS graduates approximately 39 officers annually.

Joint Advanced Warfighting School (JAWS)

The mission of JAWS is to “produce graduates who can create campaign-quality concepts, plan for the employment of all elements of national power, accelerate transformation, succeed as joint force operational / strategic planners, and be creative, conceptual, adaptive, and

⁴¹ Air University, “School of Advanced Air and Space Studies,” <http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/SAASS/> (accessed December 22, 2017).

⁴² Ibid., (accessed December 22, 2017).

innovative.”⁴³ JAWS was established in 2004 by the CJCS, then General Richard Myers. It is the only joint military planning school of its kind, modeled after SAMS and controlled by the Chairman, which produces critical thinking officers that are experts in strategy and the “Operational Arts.”⁴⁴ JAWS is an 11-month Senior Level College (SLC) course that awards a Master’s of Science degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy (JPME II credit is also awarded). All qualified service, Interagency, and specified allied nation officers can apply for selection into the school. Specific studies include historical campaign analysis, war and political theory, national/international strategy, design theory, international relations, and the Joint Operational Planning Process (JOPP). The course culminates with an end of year capstone to various European military commands, as well as battlefield tours.⁴⁵ JAWS students incur a 36-month payback to designated CCMD J5s, and receive JQO status upon completion of their tours. JAWS graduates approximately 40 students annually.

Advanced Warfighting School Comparison

There are many similarities and a few differences observed in each of the Advanced Warfighting Schools. All of the schools capitalize on the study and analysis of military history; however, the service schools tend to be service centric when framing current and past military operations in their curriculums. Service schools also teach their service versions of the planning process, which models closely to the joint process with some service specific differences. Only SAMS and MAWS as service colleges place an emphasis on JPP. JAWS as a joint planning school covers JPP as a core study. SAASS is the only service school that teaches strategy only,

⁴³ Joint Forces Staff College, “Joint Advanced Warfighting School,” <http://jfsc.ndu.edu/Academics/Joint-Advanced-Warfighting-School-JAWS/> (accessed December 28, 2017).

⁴⁴ Ibid., (accessed December 28, 2017).

⁴⁵ Ibid., (accessed December 28, 2017).

with no other plans or team leadership courses. All other schools integrate some form of service and joint campaign strategy into their curriculums. JAWS expands on its strategy classes, and includes national/international theory as it is related to the strategic environment. Both JAWS and SAMS also differ from other planning schools as they offer expanded studies in Theory of War, Design Theory, and Future Wars. Only JAWS and SAMS integrate JPME II requirements into their curriculums for final JQO status upon completion of required joint tours. With the exception of SAASS as a strategy school only, all other planning schools provide the necessary professional knowledge and skill-sets needed among service and joint planners prior to assuming their assignments. JAWS and SAMS have the most to offer in expanded curriculums, and provide advanced JPME studies for JQO status.

CHAPTER 3: SHAPING FUTURE PLANNING CONDITIONS

“Those who are victorious plan effectively and change decisively. They are like a great river that maintains its course, but adjusts its flow.” – Sun Tzu

NOP v. Navy Strategy – Similarities, Education, Placement

There are multitudes of similarities between the NOP and Navy Strategist programs. First, both programs are only offered to URL communities, and are considered subspecialties, requiring officers to remain in their primary warfare areas for career and promotion milestones. Second, both programs have the same sponsor, Navy N3/N5, as both strategy and plans are a function of service and joint planning directorates. Third, both programs retain the same detailing process with BUPERS, as URL officers only support these specialties when they are available for shore tours outside of their primary warfare duties. Fourth, there are educational requirements for both programs that have similarities among the curriculums. The Navy Strategy program requires specific strategy degrees. A NOP officer with a JAWS education satisfies many elements of the strategy subspecialty, as it covers national/international strategy development, and awards a Master’s of Science degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy. Fifth, both programs require payback tours within similar billeting locations. The majority of the planning and strategy billets are found at OSD, the Joint Staff, CCMDs, and Navy fleet staffs.¹ Many of the billets reside in the N5/J5 directorates, and directly relate to the Strategy, Planning, and Resourcing process referenced in Joint Publication 1 (JP-1).² Finally, selection into both programs comes at the officer mid-grade and above levels (O-4 through O-6). Specialties

¹ Naval Administrative Message, “Establishment of the Navy Strategy Subspecialty,” NAVADMIN 011/15 (Chief of Naval Operations: DTG 141554Z Jan 2015), 3.

² U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, Joint Publication 1 (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, July 12, 2017), II-5.

selection begins around the 11-year mark and beyond, giving officers time to complete their primary warfare qualifications and tours early.

There are also a few differences found within the NOP and Navy Strategy programs. These center on mission areas and educational requirements for each specialty. The mission of NOP is to “develop a cadre of warfare officers who can provide experience and expertise as planners in critical Navy mission areas.”³ The mission of Navy Strategist is “to enhance the Navy’s ability to develop and implement strategy and policy while strengthening the connective tissue between educational programs and strategy billet assignment.”⁴ Educational requirements to accomplish these missions differ in approach. As mentioned earlier, Strategy requirements point to such degree programs as the FEF, Politico-Military Masters, Arthur S. Moreau strategic studies, and the Naval Postgraduate School strategy curriculum. Planning education is tied to one of the four Advanced Warfighting Schools (not including SAASS), where strategy is covered as a function of the service and joint planning processes. There are more similarities than differences between the two programs, and educational requirements can be timed to meet the intent of both specialties if they are combined as one. Enter the S&P officer as an alternative to the status quo.

Strategy and Plans (S&P) Officer (RL) Career Path

A separate Restricted Line U.S. Navy S&P officer community with the proper career path that identifies requirements in education, billeting, and opportunities for promotion gives the Navy a dedicated competitive advantage in developing strategy, campaign, and contingency

³ Department of the Navy, *Naval Military Personnel Manual*, NAVPERS 15560D (Millington, TN: Department of the Navy, June 9, 2017), 1301-233.

⁴ Naval Administrative Message, “Establishment of the Navy Strategy Subspecialty,” NAVADMIN 011/15 (Chief of Naval Operations: DTG 141554Z Jan 2015), 1.

plans at both the fleet and joint command levels. The final products of the centralized community are officers that can connect the dots of the strategic framework (Policy, Strategy, and Planning), and provide expertise across a minimum of three dedicated career planning tours to support senior leader decision making. An analysis of a proposed career path below outlines how to accomplish this recommendation.

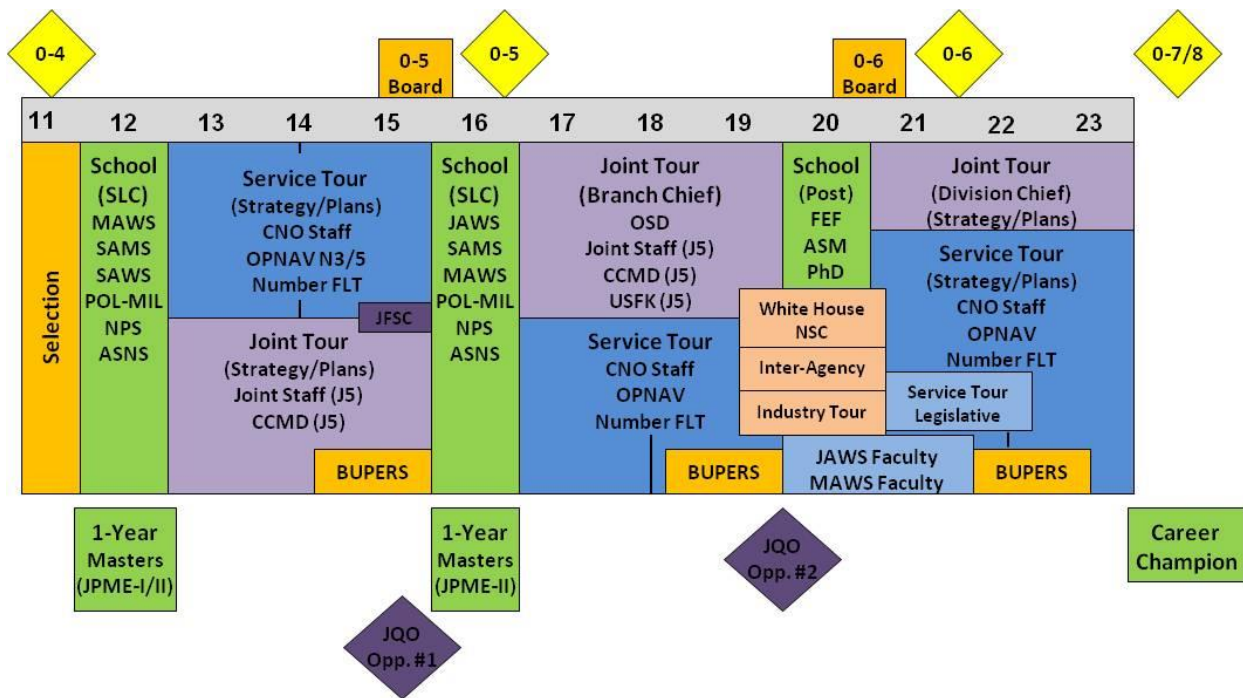


Figure 4: Strategy & Plans Officer Career Path

Figure 4 displays a separate S&P officer community that combines the best of the NOP and Navy Strategy programs into a single coherent career path. Only prior URL officers are eligible at the 0-4 rank, as they have completed primary warfare qualifications and leadership tours before application. URL warfare qualifications are a necessary step in the officer's S&P career development, as these mission areas (Surface, Submarine, Aviation, SEALS/EOD) give strategist/planners perspective on how to fight and employ service and joint forces. Selection of an initial cadre from officers already possessing strategist/planning educations and experience is also necessary at RL start-up, as this would give the community a manpower pool until future

officers cohorts mature. This action is similar to that taken by current Navy Strategy subspecialty, as the Navy selected over 300 officers to begin the program.

Figure 4 illustrates officer selection beginning as a post-Department Head 0-4, transiting into the S&P community at the 11-year mark. Once selected, officers begin their education at various institutions. For career management purposes, officers can choose to begin with strategy or plans education, and then follow-on with billet specific selections within the 12.5-15.5 year tour windows. As the career field matures, the needs of the Navy may choose to place officers in one or the other areas initially. If an officer chooses planning first (attending MAWS, SAMS, or SAW), that officer will proceed to either a service or joint payback tour. If a joint tour is selected, the officer will remain in that billet for 36-months to gain JQO status at the 15.5-year mark, pending completion of the 3-month JPME II course (SAMS includes JPME II). This is the first of two opportunities to complete JQO requirements within the career path. If a plans service tour is selected, the officer will complete up to 18-months on a Navy staff, and then rotate to another staff or complete a tour at BUPERS for career management by the end of the 15.5-year window. If an officer chooses strategy first (Pol-Mil, NPS, or ASNS), that officer will also either complete a 36-month joint tour, or choose an 18-month strategy tour on a Navy staff before rotating to BUPERS for career management by the end of the 15.5-year mark.

Beginning at the 16-year mark, S&P officers have their second educational opportunity. Officers previously selected for plans at the 12-year mark will now switch to one of the strategy curriculums. Concurrently, officers first selected in strategy will switch to plans and complete either JAWS, MAWS, or SAMS, as the officers are now in selection for or wearing 0-5.⁵ Once education is complete, officers will assume matching billets at service or joint commands. If an

⁵ JAWS is not available until the 16-year mark, as the program requires 0-5s and above; SAW is only available at the 0-4 level.

officer started with a service billet payback during the first 12.5-15.5 year window, that officer will be assigned to a 36-month joint command to complete JQO status by the 19.5-year mark. This is the second opportunity within the career path to complete JQO requirements. If an officer completed a full 36-month joint tour during the first window, that officer will be assigned to two 18-month service payback tours, with options for 0-5 level BUPERS assignments for career management. By this point (19.5 years) officers will have completed three strategy/plans tours, received joint credit for JQO, and have two Master's degrees, one in each specialty.

The 19.5-year mark begins advanced career development and breakout points for promotion to 0-6 and potentially Flag rank. The career path also becomes much more flexible, with additional fellowship and teaching options available. The third education point (optional) is available beginning at the 20-year mark, or subsequently anytime during the final tour window, allowing for payback. Officers can choose to complete advanced (PhD) degrees in strategic studies, and begin joint or service tours at the senior officer levels during the 20.5-23.5 year window. Officers also have the option of beginning fellowships and legislative service tours between the 19.5-22 year marks if they choose not to complete a PhD.⁶ These tours enhance an officer's perspective on the workings of government and industry as they relate to strategy and service programmatic planning. Additionally, teaching jobs at JAWS and MAWS planning schools are available at the 20-year mark to "give back" to the next generation of planners. Finally, the 20.5-23.5 year window is available for expanded senior officer tours as a Chief of Plans or Strategist at a joint or senior service command (OSD, Joint Staff, CCMDs, or OPNAV). These tours are the pinnacle of the S&P career path, as officers are at the 0-6 level and require the most experience. There will also be one Flag billet available as Navy Chief of S&P for

⁶ Officers completing a PhD would be required to screen for 0-6 and owe 3 additional years of service for every one year of Advanced Civil Schooling.

senior career management. Flag Officer selection as career champion will be based on Fitness Reports and career breakouts acquired at the 20-year mark and beyond (PhD, fellowships, and service tours). Officers reaching the 23.5-year mark of the career will have completed up to six tours in strategy/plans, have two Master's degrees and potentially one PhD, and have a total of 12-years experience in their fields.

S&P Career Challenges

There are many challenges to address when establishing a new S&P career path. Specifically, education, command opportunities, available billets, and promotion criteria become the driving factors for officers to move forward in the community. First, education, as shown in Figure 5, starts at the 12-year mark and continues at specific milestone points throughout the career. Officers complete a minimum of two Master's degrees in strategy and plans, and have the chance to attain a doctorate. The second challenge is command opportunity. Currently, there are five "command equivalent" billets built into the NOP community.⁷ The majority of these billets reside at fleet staffs and the Naval War College. These billets would translate over to the new S&P community, and would expand to include Joint Staff and CCMD Chief of Plans/Strategy positions at both the 0-5 and 0-6 levels. The third challenge is filling and managing available billets. As of February 2018, there were 168 Navy/joint planning billets, and 78 strategy billets, totaling 246 career billets.⁸ The S&P start-up solution is to select and maintain approximately 350 qualified officers at various levels (0-4 to 0-6) that have both the educational and specialty experiences required to populate the community. This number is an

⁷ Navy Personnel Command, "Specialty Career Path Master Billet Base," <http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/officer/Detailing/surfacewarfare/SPC/Pages/default.aspx> (accessed December 28, 2017).

⁸ Interview with CDR William Rayburn, Navy Personnel Command (PERS-442) Major Staff Placement Detailer, February 20, 2018.

approximate 40 percent manpower increase in the available billets, and factors in officers in the schoolhouse, as well as attrition from those who retire, resign, or become medically disqualified. This also models what the Navy Strategist subspecialty accomplished in 2015 to build its initial cadre.⁹ This leaves promotion criteria as the final and largest challenge to career development.

A good example for solving the promotion dilemma within the S&P community is the U.S. Army Functional Area (FA) program. The FA career path is a close model to S&P, as it selects officers outside of their warfare areas to become dedicated professionals in 1 of 8 functional areas, one of which is the FA 59 (Army Strategist) program.¹⁰ The Army promotes these officers from within their respective functional categories based on evaluation reports, career milestones, and education.¹¹ S&P officers would promote based on the same model, and would be ranked against other S&P officers stationed at the same commands. The available strategy and planning billets, both at service and joint commands, may not exceed more than 3-5 S&P Navy officers, making for a tough evaluation ranking.¹² Officers who select into S&P will already be wearing 0-4 at the time of career entry (11-year mark), and will be evaluated during the course of their first tour window. Selection for 0-5 will reduce the community slightly, but will maintain at approximately 85% for promotion to fill senior level strategy and planning jobs. S&P community managers will ensure that selection boards are instructed as to the number of 0-5/0-6s required based on the needs of the Navy, joint requirements, law, and the service budget. Other factors such as additional educational degrees, type of tours, and fellowships become the breakouts that augment an officer's fitness reports for selection to 0-5/0-6, and potentially Flag.

⁹ America's Navy, "300 Officers Nominated for New Naval Strategist Subspecialty Code," <http://www.navy.mil/submit/display.asp> (accessed December 21, 2017).

¹⁰ Department of the Army. *Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management*. Headquarters U.S. Army, Pamphlet 600-3. Washington DC: December 3, 2014, vi-viii.

¹¹ Ibid., 14.

¹² Averaging officer billet availability per command as found on the Strategy and Plans Master Billet List.

Benefits of Combining Strategy and Planning Specialties into S&P

The combination of Navy Strategist and NOP specialties into the S&P officer community yields a better return on investment for the service. As mentioned earlier, both specialties are directly related, as they are part of the Strategy, Planning, and Resourcing process that connect the three Levels of Warfare.¹³ Combining them into a centralized career path would not only save the Navy valuable resources in program administration (two separate shops within the same Navy N3/N5 manage similar educational and billet placement requirements with BUPERS), but also provide synthesis, as the two specialties complement each other in plans development. The return on investment regarding payback tours also increases, as present path URL officers in Figure 1 go from one, maybe two tours, to an expanded six tours across a 12-year period. This gives S&P officers a wealth of experience with which to solve complex problems for senior military commanders. Finally, the continuation of selecting prior URL warfare qualified officers into the S&P community at the O-4 level, gives strategist/planners a warrior's perspective on how to fight and employ forces.

Final Considerations

Access to Advanced Warfighting Schools should not be exclusive to the Navy's S&P career path. Other command-eligible URL and Staff Corps officer communities need these planning schools for professional development in their careers to apply strategy and planning to their areas of expertise (i.e., logistics and medical planning). Command-eligible officers have a greater chance of selecting for Flag, and therefore becoming the present and future service and joint decision makers. These officers must be allowed to fulfill a percentage of plans and

¹³ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, Joint Publication 1 (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, July 12, 2017), II-5.

strategy school quotas to better inform their decision calculus as they fill key strategy and planning billets at the N5/J5 or other strategic command levels. An increase in planning school quotas will need to occur to facilitate the additional S&P cadre and other Navy career paths to strike a balance. The U.S. Army recognized the need for increasing planning billets at the service level to better support rising contingency planning and the War on Terror, raising SAMS quotas from 82 students in 2009 to 144 students in 2010.¹⁴ MAWS is the likely choice for such expansion, as the Naval War College hosts the majority of Naval Officers as a SLC.

The need for flexible entry into the S&P career path is another consideration. Community retention bonuses in both the aviation and submarine warfare designators must be completed prior to selection into S&P. Some bonuses will delay entry into the program past the 11-year selection mark. The Nuclear Officer Bonus and Incentive Pay (NOBIP) plan affects a submarine officer's ability to laterally transfer into any community until completion of their post-Department Head tour.¹⁵ This places a submarine officer at approximately the 11-year mark for bonus termination, allowing for S&P on-time selection (termination of any remaining submarine/nuclear incentive pays is also required).¹⁶ The aviators have a different bonus problem. The Aviation Department Head Retention Bonus (ADHRB) terminates after an officer completes his/her squadron department head tours at approximately the 13-year mark.¹⁷ This delays 0-4 aviation officers seeking entry into the S&P community by 2 years. The final S&P entry consideration takes into account officers who do not select for command in their URL

¹⁴ Army.mil, "School of Advanced Military Studies Expands Program," https://www.army.mil/article/16073/school_of_advanced_military_studies_expands_program (accessed January 3, 2018).

¹⁵ Department of the Navy, *OPNAVINST 7220.11F: Nuclear Officer Bonus and Incentive Pay Program (NOBIP)*, (Washington DC: Chief of Naval Operations, May 18, 2017), 2.

¹⁶ "Submarine Officer Career Path & Milestones" Official Briefing, 16 October 2015, PDF, Provided by PERS-42 of the Navy Bureau of Personnel.

¹⁷ Department of the Navy, *Memorandum: Navy Active Component Aviation Department Head Retention Bonus Plan – FY18 Active Duty Service Obligation*. Attachment 1 (Washington DC: Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower, June 19, 2017), 2.

communities. This is approximately at the 15-year mark for surface, aviation, and submarine officers (see Figure 1 for SWO commanding officer looks). S&P selection flexibility will account for entry into the community up to the 16-year mark. This will shorten an officer's total career track; however, it will still allow for two specialty Master's degrees and S&P community payback tours across service and joint planner billets.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION

“Strategy is the most important department of the art of war, and strategical skill is the highest and rarest function of military genius.” – George Stillman Hillard

Opportunities

A separate functional U.S. Navy Strategy and Plans officer community with the proper career path that identifies requirements in education, billeting, and opportunities for promotion gives the Navy a dedicated competitive advantage among the services in developing strategy, campaign, and contingency plans at both fleet and joint commands by providing a professional force, well versed in the art of warfare, to apply critical thinking to the nation’s most difficult security challenges.

The creation of the S&P officer community affords the Navy several opportunities to capitalize on a new career that produces strategic-minded, professionally developed, warfare qualified officers who support senior leaders in decision making at the highest levels. Over the span of a 12-year period, these officers will gain two Master’s degrees in strategy and planning, complete up to six tours advising Flag/General Officers on the “Operational Art,” accomplish fellowships at the highest levels of government and industry, and shape future officers attending the Advanced Warfighting Schools. S&P officers will have the critical skills and experience to inform the Navy’s strategic direction, programmatics, and provide sound executable planning advice at both the operational and strategic levels of warfare.

The formation of this community meets the spirit and intent of both the 2018 National Defense Strategy, and the current 2016 CNO service design strategy. The establishment of the S&P community satisfies Secretary of Defense James Mattis’ intent of expanding an officer’s professional military education to increase intellectual leadership, professionalism in the art of

war, and the application of history as it pertains to the development of military strategy, campaigning, and contingency operations.¹ The CNO service strategy also supports the proposed community as it cites the need for high velocity learning to optimize the intellectual enterprise, and the need for understanding the lessons of history so as not to relearn them.² The CNO further seeks integration with our Joint Service and Interagency partners at all levels of interaction, to include current and future planning, concept, and capability development, reinforcing the need for joint education and service plans integration into the nation's top priority plans.³ Critical thinking in the development of strategy and plans, while applying historical campaign analysis, is the foundational methodology used by the "Operational Artist" to achieve victory. The need for a separate S&P officer community has never been more relevant.

¹ U.S. Department of Defense. *National Defense Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: Secretary of Defense, January 19, 2018), 8.

² Department of the Navy, *A Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority*, CNO Strategy (Washington DC: Chief of Naval Operations, January 2016), 9.

³ Ibid, 9.

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Vita

Commander Erik B. Lohrke, U.S. Navy, was commissioned an Ensign upon graduation from Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) at the Illinois Institute of Technology in 1996. His operational assignments include sea duty aboard USS SANATA BARBARA (AE-28) as Second Division Officer in Deck Department from 1997 to 1998. In October 1998, CDR Lohrke reported to USS FIFE (DD-991) as the Damage Control Assistant and Main Propulsion Assistant. Upon completion of Department Head School and the AEGIS training pipeline, he reported to USS HOPPER (DDG-70) as Chief Engineer in May of 2004. In October 2005, he attended the Prospective Executive Officer course and reported as Executive Officer aboard USS SALVOR (ARS-52) in February of 2006. He also served aboard USS LAKE ERIE (CG-70) as Chief Engineer from 2007 to 2008. His most recent sea assignment was as Damage Control Assistant aboard USS JOHN C STENNIS (CVN-74) from 2012 to 2013. His staff and shore assignments include the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA from 2001 to 2003, Surface Warfare Officer School (SWOS) from 2008 to 2009, and United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) from 2010 to 2012 and 2014 to 2017.